

more and more conforming to the ancient ways of the Middle Kingdom. Like Khubilai, they here favored Buddhism, particularly of the Tibetan type, and continued to exempt Buddhist, Taoist, Nestorian, and Moslem teachers and monks from taxation. Even more than he they supported Confucianism. In the fourteenth century the civil service examinations and the Hanlin Academy were restored and fresh honors were decreed for Confucius, for Mencius, and for Confucius's disciple Yen Hui. The temples to Confucius were maintained and never had the ceremonies in them been more ornate or elaborate.

Moreover, the ruling line at Cambaluc lost in vigor. In the forty years or so between the death of Khubilai and the accession of the last Mongol Emperor, in 1333, there were eight monarchs, none of them of outstanding merit, and the majority with too short a tenure of office to achieve distinction. Khubilai's grandson and successor, to be sure, ruled for about thirteen years and labored diligently to reform abuses, reduce corruption, achieve a more-equitable system of taxation, and in other ways to improve the administration. Most of the others, however, were less energetic.

The last of the line to hold China came to the throne when he was little more than a boy and proved weak and pleasure-loving. During the thirty-five years that he reigned from Cambaluc the power of the Mongols almost steadily declined. Rebellious secret organizations flourished, among them the *Pai Lien Hui*, or White Lotus Society, which was to have a long and stormy career. Revolts broke out in several different parts of the country. Attempts of the Mongols to suppress sedition, such as the renewal of the interdiction of arms to the Chinese and the rumored pro-

posals to slay all Chinese bearing certain common surnames, served only to increase the unrest. Famine in the North and trouble with the ever-treacherous Yellow River added to the problems of the alien rulers. The financial straits to which the Mongols were reduced led to an increase in the issue of paper money—a device which they had taken over from the Chinese even before their final conquest of the country—until the currency became worthless and the people were reduced to barter. Heavy taxation added to the dissatisfaction. The Mongols, too, were divided among themselves and could not present a united front to their enemies.